



THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF MANSFIELD, CONNECTICUT
KELLY M. LYMAN, SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

September 3, 2015

Dear Mansfield Families,

We are one week into the school year and I write to you to share my enthusiasm for what I have seen in our schools already and to let you know a bit about my plans to better understand the strengths and needs of the Mansfield Schools. The first day of school brought happy reunions between students and teachers. One couldn't help but smile watching the jubilant return of students and teachers to school. Since then I have visited classrooms, attended a Town Meeting and observed teacher collaboration. I can already confirm that your children are in good hands. I have seen children excited to begin their academic learning and engaged in the arts. Teachers are working together to ensure each child has an education program designed to provide support and appropriate challenges and whole schools have already come together to build community and to celebrate being together.

I will be using the opening weeks of the school year to explore multiple aspects of our school system and the wider community. Talking with administrators, teachers, other school and town staff, and our students has already begun. In addition, I am meeting many community members and will be attending fall parent organization meetings. These conversations will focus on gathering information in four areas: teaching and learning, organizational structures and culture, community and board relations, and facilities and fiscal health. Other information gathering activities include: reviewing documents, observing in our schools, and attending school events. This fall we will also be creating a Parent Advisory Committee comprised of PTO/A leadership and other interested parents. If you would like to be included in this group, please contact my office.

Much of my time in the last two weeks has been spent addressing the busing concerns brought by a change in bus routes and other issues with timeliness arriving to school and home. Route changes were made to address efficiency and safety and were based on experiences of the interim superintendent last spring and findings of an independent study commissioned by Superintendent Baruzzi a few years ago. I have become very familiar with the roads in Mansfield and recognize that transportation on a school bus across many of our rural roads presents challenges. That said, it is our responsibility to ensure students arrive at school and back home again in a safe and efficient manner. As we work through these changes we are also ensuring that the specifics of our contract with Durham School Services (our bus provider) are followed and that we adhere to Mansfield Public School Transportation policy. A time study of each bus route is underway and in a meeting today with Durham Services I shared my intent to hold them to their contractual obligations and invoke penalties should those obligations not be met. Once we have reviewed data from the time study we will examine routes again to see if any route adjustments can be made.

I look forward to spending more time in our schools and working with our teachers and administrators to advance our educational system. There are so many wonderful things upon which we can build. I hope to meet you at events and gatherings throughout the year and hearing about your hopes and dreams for your child's education.

Sincerely,

Kelly M. Lyman